
**Manuscript Draft for CCC International Writing Research
Workshop**

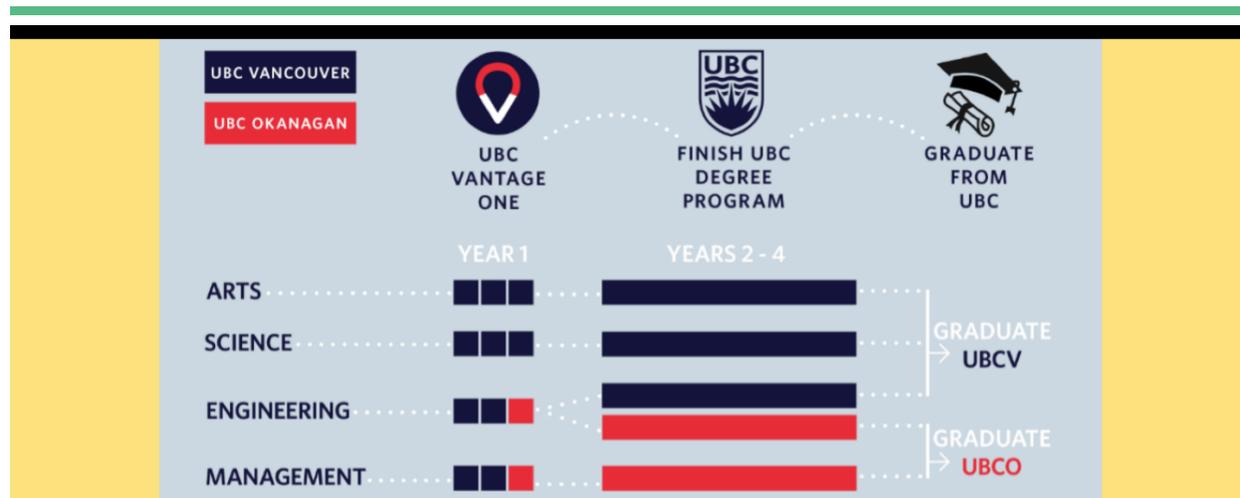
Indigenous Studies and Academic English in Relation: Teaching Research Writing to First-Year International Students on Musqueam Land

Katja Thieme and Jennifer Walsh Marr

Version January 10, 2019

Introduction

Each year since 2014, the University of British Columbia (UBC) has welcomed a new group of international students to the recently created Vantage College. Fully integrated into UBC, Vantage College is a first-year, cohort-based program with intensive language support—the only one of its kind in North America. The students are international students—the majority of them from mainland China—who are admitted on their academic accomplishments but who do not yet fully meet UBC’s English language requirements and who receive integrated language support in their first year so as to better assure success in their subsequent years of study. Vantage College has 4 streams for different bachelor programs: an Arts, a Science, an Applied Science, and a Management stream (see figure 1).



VANTAGE COLLEGE STREAMS: ARTS, SCIENCE, APPLIED SCIENCE, MANAGEMENT

vantagecollege.ubc.ca/

Figure 1. Overview of disciplinary streams in UBC Vantage College.

In the Arts stream—where both authors work—some of the instructors who teach courses in academic English, writing studies, political science, geography, history, and sociology have collaborated on integrating material on Indigenous land, history, and politics in our instruction. UBC is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. In 2006, UBC recognized the unique relationship with the Indigenous communities on whose lands it is located in Memoranda of Affiliation (The University of British Columbia), and since 2009 it has had an Indigenous Strategic Plan (originally called Aboriginal Strategic Plan, the new and renamed version was developed under a new university president). Numerous initiatives in all areas of university work have preceded and accompanied these high-level administrative efforts that are directed at building and maintaining good relations with local Indigenous communities and their knowledge. Our project asks, how should such relations shape the work of teaching first-year international students? And more broadly, how can our practice in academic language and writing instruction be modified and positioned to aid in decolonizing higher education?

In this project we lay out how instructing international students in local and international Indigenous issues can be located at a productive intersection with the teaching of academic English and academic writing. In Vantage College Arts, there are two sets of faculty who provide language and writing courses (see figure 2)—instructors in Vantage College’s own Academic English Program (AEP) and instructors who teach writing studies courses that are offered at UBC to students across several faculties by Arts Studies in Research and Writing (ASRW). Both sets of instructors deliver academic English courses with approaches that emphasize explicit use of metalanguage. In the genesis of the Vantage Arts program, the

metalinguage approaches were set out well before the Indigenous studies materials were developed, and we will introduce these approaches in that order before analyzing and theorizing their productive intersection with teaching Indigenous studies.

1. ACADEMIC ENGLISH

Integrated language support
(VANT 140, LLED 200)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
VANT 140: Content and Language Enrichment Tutorials
 Arts Stream Cohort B- Sept 2017-Apr 2018
 (3 credits)

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

V03: Tuesday 1:00-2:00 ORCH 4056
 Thursday 12:00-2:00 ORCH 4056

The VANT 140 course provides sustaine support for linked content courses. For th of VANT 140, those linked courses are:

Instructor: Jennifer Walsh Marr
 email: jennifer.walshmarr@ubc.ca
 office: ORCH 3017
 appointments: <https://ubc.myonline.net/>

GEOG 121 with Dr. Siobhán McPhee
 HIST 104 with Dr. David Bonyis
 POLI 100 with Mr. Serbulent Turan

Course Description
 The overarching goal of the VANT 140 course is to help students develop strategies for self-directed learning. VANT 140 reinforces student learning and advances students' disciplinary literacy thro heightened understanding of the links between language and the construction of disciplinary knowledge. Discipline specific tasks reinforce student learning of content from linked courses. TH

2. RESEARCH WRITING

First-year writing requirement
(ASTU 204A, WRDS 150)

WRDS 150
 January 2, 2018

RESEARCH & WRITING IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

DR. KATJA THIEME
 Email: katja.thieme@ubc.ca

OFFICE HOURS
 Thu 12:30-3:30 pm
 Fri 1:30-3:30pm

OFFICE
 3009 Orchard Commons
 IBC Learning Lounge

COURSE DESCRIPTION
 Welcome to WRDS 150! This course studies research writing as a situated practice, as part of research culture. Readings and assignments in this course are intended to help you (1) analyze how different styles of research writing are connected to different research contexts and (2) participate, through your own research and writing, in the scholarly conversations that define these contexts.
 In my sections of ASTU 204A and WRDS 150 we investigate global citizenship in relation to the culture and history of the Olympic Games. In ASTU 204A you studied artistic work and public discussion about the Olympics. In WRDS 150 we will study research writing. What types of questions do researchers in fields such as political science, psychology, and urban geography ask when they study the phenomenon of the Olympic Games? Are they using terms like "globalization," "citizenship," and "nationalism" in similar ways, or are there



Figure 2. Sample syllabi from an AEP and an ASRW instructor.

Language & Writing Instruction at Vantage College

In Vantage College Arts, AEP instructors with expertise in teaching English as an additional language run courses and tutorials that provide integrated language support. This form of support is unique to Vantage College and is not offered to any other students at UBC. In contrast, ASRW instructors who teach first-year writing studies courses also offer the same or similar courses to several thousand other students each year. Both those groups of instructors take pride in the innovative and research-based approaches they use; approaches shared by instructors in each group come from different but related traditions of language and writing instruction.

The Vantage College AEP program approach English with a functional view on grammar that is based on research in systemic functional linguistics (SFL). SFL understands language as a system of functional choices in order to then teach how these choices play out differently in different contexts and genres (Duff et. al; Halliday and Matthiessen; Biber and Conrad). SFL approaches to teaching academic English present the language choices that are inherent in research discourse in explicit and scaffolded ways and support students' need to acquire the linguistic resources that produce this discourse. These resources include linguistic metalanguage

that helps students categorize, and thereby *see*, functional units of language and then analyze, practice, and creatively use those patterns in their own speech and writing.

The writing studies faculty in Vantage College come from research backgrounds in English language and literary studies and employ genre-based pedagogy (Hyland) in their courses. Genre-based pedagogy highlights how academic genres do the work of research and perform social actions within research environments, how these genres are situated in the context of disciplinary communities, and how their formal characteristics shift between different purposes and disciplines. In this view, genres and their forms are shaped and associated with the situations in which they perform social action (Bitzer; Miller; Bawarshi). These courses combine genre move analysis and its attention to how sentences work together to perform complex moves (Swales), with applied language studies' more detailed attention to how choices of words and phrases signal positions and turns in argument. The latter approach is particularly fruitful for Vantage College students because it links closely with terms introduced in AEP courses, and because it is tied to specific words and phrases, a level of analysis which is very familiar to EAL students.

For both types of approaches, metalanguage is part of the process of transferring knowledge that was gained in a class dedicated to academic English or writing to the diverse research and writing settings students will encounter in their subsequent work. When students enter new and different discursive situations after they have taken courses that teach language-focused study of academic discourse, their knowledge of metalanguage will help them adapt. Metalanguage supports the analysis of new situations and the production of new genres by knowledgeably connecting elements of the new situation and texts to previously encountered situations and texts. In its emphasis on analysis of academic discourse with the help of applied language concepts (see figures 3 and 4), the teaching of academic literacy at Vantage College thus builds confidently on the detailed analyses and situated approaches developed by years scholarship in writing studies and English for academic purposes (Jordan; Casanave; Paré; Duff et al.).

Dates	Focus	New text
Week 1, Sept 7	Introductions, course outlines, making groups	VANT 140, HIST 104, POLI 100 & GEOG 121 course outlines
Week 2, Sept 12, 14	Academic literacies, group work & vocabulary building	
Week 3, Sept 21	Nominalization	Knox & Marston (2001)
Week 4, Sept 26, 28	Components of Content: Participants, Processes & Circumstances Notetaking	Young (2004) Andrea & Overfield (2012) prologue
Week 5, Oct 3, 5	Introduction to First Nations focus Organizational features of research articles	Wickwire (1994)
Week 6, Oct 10, 12	Summarizing, Responding & Extending purpose & language features	Morris (2014)
Week 7, Oct 17, 19	Paraphrasing	Wotherspoon & Hansen (2013)
Week 8, Oct 23, 27	Conditionals	Harris (2004)
Week 9, Oct 31	SRE #1	
Week 10, Nov 7, 9	Interactional Resources: Hedging & Boosting	Lightfoot (2010)
Week 11, Nov 14, 16	Evaluative language	
Week 12, Nov 21, 23	Review & SRE #2	
Week 13, Nov 28, 30	Test as text <i>Individual reflection on skills development</i>	

METALANGUAGE IN THE SYLLABUS

VANT 140: Content and Language Enrichment Tutorials
Jennifer Walsh Marr



Figure 2. Metalanguage highlighted in a syllabus for an academic English course.

Feb 13	Annotations	Monday: no class, BC Family Day 1. range of language choices in citation and reporting expressions ; proposals as genres & their genre moves	annotation drafts due on ComPAIR
Feb 19	Midterm break: no classes		
Feb 26	Proposals	1. planning your proposal: making genre moves 2. proposal consultations in lieu of class	
Mar 5	Stylistic features	1. on hedges, boosters, & modality ; peer review of proposals 2. working with primary materials/data; method	proposals due in ComPAIR proposals due on Canvas
Mar 12	Stylistic features	1. making use of forms of citation, modifying named speakers, and evaluating 2. on double reporting and citation of diverse voices	
Mar 19	Research presentations	1. research presentations (approx. 4 min. per person); practice of stylistic analysis 2. research presentations	first 700 words of paper due in ComPAIR
Mar 26	Stylistic analysis	1. on disciplinary differences in language features	research paper due on

METALANGUAGE IN THE SYLLABUS

WRDS 150: Research and Writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences
Katja Thieme

Figure 4. Metalanguage highlighted in a syllabus for a research writing course.

Among the goals of teaching metalanguage is that these terms help students to recognize patterns of language use in current scholarship. Providing students with the metalanguage that enables them to conduct their own study of usage patterns in academic English opens their eyes to how different genres mobilize language features as well as how different disciplines

have developed varying patterns of language use within those genres. When it comes to the point in our courses where we study Indigenous scholarship with the students, students are thus more alert to the language choices which Indigenous scholars make in their research writing. More specifically, one way in which Indigenous scholarship distinguishes itself from scholarship in other fields is in its preferable referencing of Indigenous scholars, including through the use of modifiers that mark Indigenous identity. Another language aspect we draw students' attention to are the changing political currencies of certain terms and the fast rate by which vocabulary in Indigenous studies gets revised and updated. We also speak about how deliberate verb choices and the naming of agents are in historical and political descriptions in Indigenous studies scholarship.

Our attention to scholars' differential use of language resources also opens the floor for a consideration of students' own identity and positionality when working with Indigenous studies material and scholarship. Here, students practice the expression of self-location in their own writing, the critical positioning of their project and its claims, and the use of evaluating expressions in relation to cited materials and topics addressed.

[More detailed discussion of teaching materials we developed. Examples of how we analyzed specific samples of Indigenous scholarship with students.]

Language Choices in Indigenous Studies Scholarship

The integration of Indigenous studies material in the Vantage College curriculum has added an important layer to academic language learning. In the Vantage College Arts stream, some of the teaching of linguistic resources for academic speech and writing has been expanded to include language choices made in current writing by Indigenous scholars. In doing so, we are pushing both systemic functional linguistics and rhetorical genre theory into new realms for research and teaching practice.

We want to note here that pedagogical use of SFL as described by Sydney School linguists David Rose and J.R. Martin has, historically, been grounded in the need to change the teaching of reading and writing for the benefit of, in their case, Australian Indigenous students. Rose and Martin's 2012 book *Learning to Write, Reading to Learn* positions SFL language teaching as more effective than traditional or constructivist approaches in successfully counteracting unequal educational outcomes among Aboriginal and migrant children. Rose and Martin show that *explicit* instruction with the use appropriate linguistic metalanguage is particularly helpful for students whose culturally different reading and meaning-making practices put them in a disadvantaged position when *implicit* forms of literacy instruction are favoured. However, despite their proximity to questions of Western educational attainment among Indigenous students, Rose and Martin do not seem to consider opening their SFL curriculum in such a way

that language resources and genre structures used by Indigenous writers are included in these analyses and this form of teaching.

This is the area of research into which we venture with our pedagogical work: 1) to help students recognize the patterns of language use in current scholarship on Indigenous studies as well as 2) discern how to use these language resources depending on one's own identity position in relation to the topics one writes about.

Critical Questions

[Caution is built into our approach—Vantage College does not have Indigenous instructors, we clarify our own positioning and guide students in theirs; we center Indigenous scholars in our choice of materials; we build relations with Indigenous scholars on campus]

Conclusion

This project reports on a pedagogical innovation in-progress. More specifically, it showcases how working with students on disciplinary language patterns—in the way that the field of English for academic purposes advocates—provides a partial pathway toward decolonizing language and writing support in writing centres as well as in writing studies or EAP courses. Vantage College's work in this area has led to new institutional partnerships, including a large-scale project with members of the program in Indigenous studies that aims to provide more widely available educational resources on Indigenous contexts and histories for international students.

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Bio: Katja Thieme teaches at UBC in Arts Studies in Research and Writing, Vantage College, and in the English Department. Her research is located in the field of rhetorical genre theory. She is particularly interested in how written genres constitute movements, and how these genres change. Most recently she has investigated such change, with collaborator Shurli Makmillen, in a study of writing assignments in courses with Indigenous studies content. She has taught many UBC undergraduate students how to produce and analyze research writing and is an avid proponent of genre-based pedagogy.